

THE CONFESSIONS OF A WIFE

AUNT MARY TO THE RESCUE

Chapter CXXXVIII.

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I hurried back to the hotel and rushed up to Aunt Mary's rooms.

"Dear Aunt Mary," I said breathlessly, "I know I have been neglecting you, but when you know all that has happened in the last week I know you will forgive me."

"I have nothing to forgive," sweetly rejoined that blessed woman. "I can't expect young folks to always be staying behind waiting for me. I know, dear, you will see as much of me as you can, but, oh, dear Margie, I wish you could find something that would engross the attention of an old woman like me."

"That's what I came to tell you," I said, "but first you must pledge yourself to secrecy. Cross your heart and say you will never tell a soul what I am going to say to you."

"How excited you are, Madge. Of course, I'll not tell anyone," whispered Aunt Mary, catching some of my excitement.

"Well, then here it is: Jack is secretly married to that little chorus girl I was telling the folks about the other night. She is in town and expects soon to be a mother and we—you and I—have got to take care of her."

"What?" fairly shouted Aunt Mary as I paused for breath. Then I settled down and told her the whole story. Just how the whole thing came about; how dear and sweet Miss Dundap was and how she needed just the care and loving attention that she could give her I could see in a moment that I had given Aunt Mary the one thing that would make her life bearable without Uncle John—the thought that she would be necessary to some one's happiness.

"And now, Aunt Mary," I continued, "I want to ask you if you would mind if Dick and I divided that money—

you gave us with Jack.

"Why, Margie," exclaimed Aunt Mary, "I shall be glad to have you do this. Your Uncle John only gave you this money so that I might feel able to ask you and Jack to do things for me. I'll tell you what I will do. I'll give that little Dundap girl a thousand dollars so she can live nicely and bear and rear her child in peace and comfort."

"Can you do this, Aunt Mary? Have you enough to live on if you do it?"

"Margie, John left me quite a little money outside of the income he arranged for me in his will and I will never be able to use up that six thousand a year on my own self. Don't you think we had better go and see Mrs. John Waverly now? It seems strange there is another Mrs. John Waverly. Oh, I hope they will be as happy as John and I were."

Aunt Mary had arisen and was hurrying about to get her hat and wrap.

"Call a taxi, Margie," commanded Aunt Mary, thereby taking absolute command of the situation, much to my surprise and delight.

We drove over to Mary's little room (strange that Jack's wife name should be that of Aunt Mary's). She immediately was taken into Aunt Mary's heart and literally into her arms.

We soon found a lovely quiet place about five blocks from our hotel and "Aunt" Mary stifled "Sister" Mary's cries of delight and exclamations that she could not afford it by handing her the check for a thousand dollars and making us drive to her bank where an account was opened for Mrs. John Waverly II.

After we had her all fixed up, we drove home, and dear Aunt Mary put her arms about my neck and said: "Margie, I cannot tell you how grateful I am to you for giving me something to live for. I love that little